

ITEM:

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SUBJECT:

Amendment to the Basin Plan for the Control of Nutrients in Clear Lake

BOARD ACTION:

Receive comments on the proposed Basin Plan amendment for the control of nutrients in Clear Lake.

BACKGROUND:

Clear Lake is listed on the 303(d) list as impaired for nutrients due to nuisance blooms of blue-green algae. Studies indicate that excess phosphorus contributes to the occurrence of the algae blooms. Most sources of phosphorus to Clear Lake are sediment driven and include erosion from agricultural and urban areas, instream channel erosion, timber harvesting, runoff from roads, construction, gravel mining, wildfires, control burns, off highway vehicle (OHV) use, and dredging and filling. Fertilizer use (both urban and rural) and sewer and septic overflows may also contribute phosphorus to the lake.

An outside contractor (Tetra Tech) used water quality modeling to define a TMDL target and calculate the phosphorus load reductions necessary to meet the target. Regional Water Board staff used the phosphorus calculations to allocate loading among point and nonpoint sources. The phosphorus load allocations are included in the proposed Basin Plan amendment language. The responsible parties, as identified in the Basin Plan amendment, would be required to submit progress reports to the Regional Board in 2011 and 2016. The progress reports would include estimates of phosphorus loading, a summary of actions taken to reduce phosphorus loads and a description of conditions within the lake.

A draft staff report has been developed and is currently available for public review. The staff report describes the proposed Basin Plan amendment, the TMDL elements, the TMDL implementation plan, and the monitoring and surveillance program. The draft staff report and the Tetra Tech report are available on the Internet at the following location:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/programs/tmdl/clearlake_nutrient_tmdl.html

ISSUES:

The issues to be considered include:

- Appropriateness of the chlorophyll-a target
- The technical basis of the phosphorus reduction strategy
- The cost of monitoring and implementation
- Recent improvements in water clarity

Mgmt. Review _____

Legal Review _____

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11020 Sun Center Dr. # 200

Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-6114